

# REAL CHANGE

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APRIL 4 - 10, 2007

## Unpaid Time

**Union picketers to underscore Qwest Field's working conditions**

By **CYDNEY GILLIS**  
Staff Reporter

It's a good thing Iggy Pop knows how to dive over crowds. To play in Seattle on April 27, the legendary punk rocker might have to jump a picket line of union stagehands at Qwest Field's WaMu Theater.

It's not Iggy who's the problem. Union members say it's billionaire Paul Allen and his company First & Goal, which operates Qwest Field. Several years ago, after the union picketed the stadium, the company signed an agreement that gives the union preference for stadium concerts and requires all concert producers to pay union scale.

The hitch is it's the concert producers who hire stagehand crews, not First & Goal.

"It's up to the promoters to decide who they want to use. It's not First & Goal's choice," says John Morrison, president of Event Resource Management (ERM), a Mercer Island company that gets a number of the jobs at Qwest Field and the 5,000-seat WaMu Theater created last year at the stadium's event center.

The union says First & Goal is responsible: It contracted with promoter AEG to open the new theater and shouldn't be using low-wage outfits like ERM that provide no benefits, fail to give breaks, and don't pay workers for time spent filling out W-2 forms and timesheets — something union members say they have seen firsthand.

Last fall, after learning that ERM hadn't paid union scale for a concert at the stadium, Local 15 of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stagehand Employees asked members to sign up with ERM and get on the crew that set up and loaded out the Rolling Stones concert at Qwest Field.

"It was a little scary because of the inexperience of the people I was working with," says Nick Shellman, a Local 15 member. At one point, he says, a worker turned to hear what a crew chief was saying and nearly got hit by stage platforms being thrown down to him.

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JOHN SCHROEDER AND DAVID MILES, BOTH SECURITY GUARDS DOWNTOWN, ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN ORGANIZING WITH SEIU LOCAL 6. THE UNION WANTS FOUR LOCAL SECURITY FIRMS THAT EMPLOY 700 OFFICERS TO AGREE TO BETTER WAGES AND HEALTH BENEFITS. PHOTO BY PAUL RICE.

## Not Rent-a-Cops

**Security officers out to corner health benefits and "a little respect"**

By **PAUL RICE**  
Contributing Writer

There is a familiar stereotype in movies and literature of the "rent-a-cop": the wannabe police officer incapable of doing anything but eating to pass the time, who sits in front of a television as the real heroes chase bad guys through a downtown highrise. David Miles wants people to inspect that proverbial donut before they chomp down.

"If you watch movies, you see how we're portrayed, but if you talk to people in my building, you'll get a different outlook on what we do," says Miles. He's been a security officer in the Columbia Center downtown for four years. When he started, he learned quickly that what is perceived about his profession is more often than not a cultural fallacy. Instead, he sees a certain nobility in it.

"We are first responders," he proclaims. "Maybe we don't carry a weapon, maybe we don't have police powers, but if anything happens, we're first on the scene."

John Schroeder, a security officer for 13 years, is of the same mind. "We're trying to get a little respect," he says.

So are the 700 other security officers in the Seattle/Bellevue area. Salaries for the position average out at \$11 an hour, usually with optional, and expensive, medical benefits. Some security positions even start at minimum wage, with no potential for benefits. For the last three years, officers have been organizing via the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 6, and on March 25 they agreed on a general contract proposal that includes a base salary as well as legitimately affordable health care. Now they're ready to take the debate to their employers.

The employers represented in this round of talks include three national companies — Allied Barton, Securitas, and ABM Security — and one local company, Northwest Protective Services. Charles Taylor, an organizer for Local 6, says that the ultimate goal is a template contract for all security companies, both national and local. None of the companies responded to requests for comment on the upcoming negotiations.

The Seattle City Council recently issued a proclamation naming April 4 "Security Officer Appreciation Day."

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## STADIUM BEATING

Tapping public funds in order to build sports arenas continues a trend that benefits teams, owners.

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The city says that, in order for Occidental and others to be safe, certain controls need to be removed.

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# Our Bread, Their Circus

**Sonics, NASCAR lobbying continues trend of public investment for private profit**

By **NICK LICATA**  
Seattle City Council

Seattle City Council President Nick Licata spoke March 29 before a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee examining the impacts of taxpayer-financed stadiums, convention centers, and hotels. Here's an excerpt of his comments.

In 1995, I co-founded Citizens for More Important Things. This group fought the use of taxes to construct three stadiums for professional sports organizations over the past dozen years. Since becoming a city councilmember I have continued to be involved in this issue.

Efforts to secure public funding for these facilities [follow] a pattern that has been repeated across the nation, where perfectly usable facilities are declared too shabby for the home team. If they are not replaced with a more expensive facility, it's *adiós amigos* to the home fans.

Seattle rebuilt our Seattle Coliseum in 1995 to the specifications of Seattle's professional basketball team, the SuperSonics, creating the state-of-the-art NBA KeyArena at a cost of \$75 million in public money. The sale of luxury boxes was to pay off the construction bonds. When the team could not sell enough of them, the city had to pick up the tab. Nine years later, after the city had paid millions annually and with over half the public debt still outstanding, the team said that the facility was outdated and it could not be profitable unless the public invested over \$200 million for a new facility. When they got the cold shoulder from political leaders and the public, the Sonics were sold for an estimated \$80 million profit to a

new owner, who now wants the public to contribute more than \$400 million for an even bigger facility, this time in a suburban area.

In 1995, while the city was remodeling for the SuperSonics, our professional baseball team, the Mariners, declared that their venue, the 18-year-old Kingdome, was obsolete for baseball, and threatened to leave Seattle if they were not provided with a new stadium with a retractable roof, at a cost to the public of over \$300 million. The previous year the county had spent \$73 million repairing the Kingdome's leaky roof. A few weeks after local voters rejected a sales tax increase to pay for the new stadium, the state legislature met in an emergency session to approve a tax package that eventually built it.

The Seahawks, seeing how successful the Mariners were, demanded significant remodeling of the Kingdome for football in 1997, threatening to move if they did not get it. Before they could move, Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen purchased the team, subject to public approval of a \$300 million public funding package. He spent \$7 million on the election, outspending opposition 21 to 1, and won by approximately 0.2 percent. The Kingdome was then imploded, with about \$100 million in debt still unpaid.

What does this pattern reveal? Just what our city staff discovered when reviewing the life of professional sport facilities around the nation. When public money is used, professional sport facilities are remodeled every six years. Why? Because public money is readily available and free to the teams. They have little reason to conserve it.

If pending state legislation passes for the new Sonics basketball arena and a speedway that NASCAR has requested, our city, county, and state governments will have contributed a breathtaking \$2.3 billion over the past dozen years for new professional sports venues.

This money could have gone to provide public benefits or public facilities with a broader, more important use. For instance, city admission taxes used to fund such services as police and social services; there are county service taxes which could go to hundreds of local community groups to support economic development; and finally, there are state retail sales taxes that normally fund education.

What about the benefits from these facilities? I'm no economist, but what I have seen in Seattle, and in other cities that I have visited in my capacity as a member of the National League of Cities, has not revealed any lasting advantage of subsidizing huge stadiums or arenas. Overall there is meager evidence that new stadiums improve urban living or increase retail shopping in their vicinity. Our own experience shows that certain crimes increased around the two new stadiums from what they had been previously in that same neighborhood.

Municipalities need to provide more important public services than building half-billion-dollar sports venues whose primary purpose is not the enjoyment of sports games but producing profits for team owners and huge salaries for players. The federal government can stop this trend by using its regulatory authority. I urge you to do so. ■

#### [Take Action]

**Locally:** Call your legislators at 1 (800)562-6000 and pass on this message: We have higher public priorities — like health care, affordable housing, and education — than building a new \$400 million basketball arena.

**Nationally:** Contact House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform chairman Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D - Ohio) and ranking member Rep. Darrell Issa (R - Ohio) and ask them to sponsor legislation that will impose federal campaign spending limits on public referenda for stadiums, keep teams from building their facilities with tax-exempt bonds, and ensure that public money be spent only when a project will provide measurable public benefits.

When public money is used, professional sport facilities are remodeled every six years. Why? Because public money is readily available and free to the teams. They have little reason to conserve it.



Real Change is published weekly and is sold by the poor and homeless of Seattle. Vendors receive 65¢ of the \$1.00 paid for this paper.

Mission Statement:

Real Change exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

The Real Change Homeless Empowerment Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Programs include the Real Change newspaper, the StreetWrites peer support group for homeless writers, the Homeless Speakers Bureau, and the First things First organizing project. All donations support these programs and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

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# Change Agent

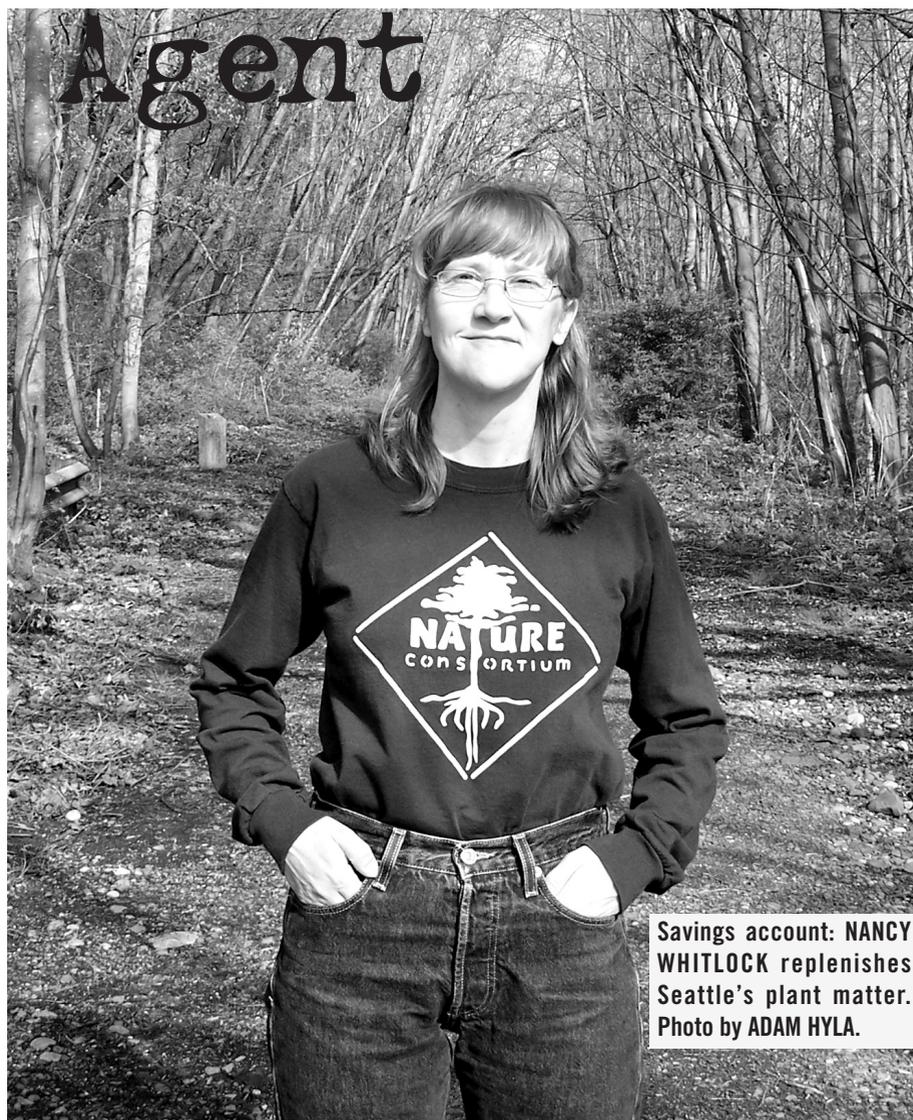
Some conservationists look to the sticks for a beautiful oxygen-making, habitat-preserving forest. Not Nancy Whitlock.

Whitlock is at work saving one of Seattle's largest contiguous pieces of forestland. The West Duwamish Greenbelt's 500-some acres are overrun by prickly holly, always-growing ivy, and well-rooted Himalayan blackberry. Girded with her first grant to do the work, Whitlock remembers thinking, "How am I going to do what I said I was going to do?"

Some years later, 12 of the forest's acres are under restoration, planted with 6,275 native conifers and other local flora. Whitlock's volunteer crews pull, plant, and enjoy the company of artists commissioned to perform for the day — a dancer, say, who wrestles with the vines — putting creative works in a new venue, before a new audience.

Whitlock's organization, the Nature Consortium, has committed itself to the West Duwamish Greenbelt's restoration for as long as it's around. An urban forest matters, she says, because "once you lose it, it's gone."

—Adam Hyla



Savings account: NANCY WHITLOCK replenishes Seattle's plant matter. Photo by ADAM HYLA.

## Downtown Parks: New Rules

City wants changes to "get things going" in public spaces

By CYDNEY GILLIS  
Staff Reporter

Pioneer Square's Occidental is among several downtown parks that could host permanent cafés and regular nighttime events under new guidelines proposed by Seattle Parks and Recreation. Photo by Adam Hyla.



The people who try to sleep in and around downtown parks at night could be in for a rude awakening once the nighttime concerts start. But, if they have any money, they can always go to one of the parks' new year-round concession stands and buy a latte or snack.

Allowing evening concerts and permanent food vendors are just two of the proposed rule changes that the Seattle Parks Department put on the table last week to liven up the city's 10 downtown parks as part of Mayor Nickels' Center City Parks Initiative.

Parks that would be affected by the proposed rule changes, which will be presented at a Board of Park Commissioners meeting April 12, include Freeway, Occidental, and the Pike Place Market's Victor Steinbrueck Park.

Last year, a task force appointed by the mayor to look at the downtown parks recommended a number of ways to draw more visitors and make the parks feel safer, such as adding more events and creating a new team of park rangers to patrol the parks — an idea the City Council shot down in last fall's budget process.

Parks planner Victor Schoenberg says that the proposed rule changes are aimed at making it easier to use the parks and book events by streamlining rules that currently vary by location. For instance, while biking, skating, and skateboarding aren't allowed in most

downtown parks, only Freeway Park prohibits using a Frisbee.

Under the new rules, which Parks spokesperson Dewey Potter says will get a public hearing before any changes are made, park-goers could play Frisbee at Freeway Park, but lose the right to skateboard at Pioneer Square's Occidental Park.

For the first time, Occidental and all the downtown parks could have multiple special events per month, permanent cafés and food stands, and nighttime concerts, subject to the city's noise ordinance and a proposed new rule calling for a 15-minute break every 90 minutes.

A three-hour limit would still apply to amplified entertainment, but not to political speech or rallies, which Schoenberg says are covered by the First Amendment.

"There's been lots of resistance to anything commercial in parks," Potter says. But, "As the task force did its work, one of its thoughts was that downtown parks are different than neighborhood parks and need to be a little more active to keep people interested in coming back."

The proposed changes stand to have the greatest impact on Occidental, which lost 17 trees last year in a Parks remodel that community members are still contesting in court. In place of the park's former pergola, the Parks Department plans to build a café or kiosk that, under current park rules, the Pioneer Square Community Association has a say over.

Under the proposed rules, that's no longer the case, but Schoenberg says the Parks Department would continue consulting the association, along with the Pioneer Square Historic Preservation Board.

"Mostly what we're doing is removing controls," Schoenberg says. "Our goal is to get things going in the parks so it feels safe for everybody." ■

### [Event]

The Board of Park Commissioners will get a briefing on the proposed new guidelines for downtown parks on April 12, 6 p.m., at the Parks Administration Building, 100 Dexter Ave. N. in Denny Park. The proposed guidelines are at [www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/downtown.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/downtown.asp).

## Just Heard...

### Flame retardants up in smoke

Linked to learning and behavioral disorders, reproductive maladies, impaired memory, and cancer, the man-made flame retardants known as PBDEs have been banned by the state Legislature, the first such effort in the nation.

The bill, one of four Priorities for a Healthy Washington, passed the state Senate on April 4, with a 41-8 vote. Unlike legislation in other states, which tackles penta and octa forms of PBDEs, the Evergreen State's ban also covers the deca form of the chemical, produced in higher numbers than the two other forms. Short for polybrominated diphenyl ethers, PBDEs are found in a host of household goods, from upholstered furniture to mattresses, from laptops to televisions. By 2011, the use of all forms of PBDEs is to be effectively discontinued.

The bill is headed to Gov. Christine Gregoire, who, having already voiced support, is expected to sign it.

—Rosette Royale

### Backing off the track

A NASCAR raceway in Kitsap County is out. The International Speedway Corp. backed off their lobbying efforts Monday, saying the legislature's financing offer wasn't adequate for their public-private racetrack idea for the Kitsap Peninsula.

The ISC says it'll be back next year; so will their opponents. "We will continue to oppose a NASCAR track placement anywhere in Washington state," says Citizens for Healthy Economic Choices in Kitsap chair Ray McGovern, "if such a facility requires substantial tax subsidy for its development."

### Fooled you

An Olympia tent city will move to the state capitol's lawn. Wal-Mart is getting into the payday-loan business, offering an "everyday low" APR of 365 percent and a free smiley face sticker. Fighting hunger, Washington legislators are requiring corporate lobbyists to bring along a non-perishable food item each time they come calling at their offices.

These were among the April Fool's Day "news" items in a legislative e-bulletin from the Statewide Poverty Action Network. The group sent out an explanation April 2 for those with a jaundiced sense of play; Poverty Action director Aiko Schaefer says it was a good way for staff and supporters to lighten up. "Sometimes you've got to laugh at what happens in Olympia," she says.

Putting Olympia's tent city on the capitol's ample lawn, Schaefer notes, is one of those ostensibly absurd ideas that makes a kind of sense. The camp must move by the end of April, at which time the Legislature will have adjourned. "I think if the lawmakers hosted it during the legislative session," she says, "I'd be more impressed."

—Adam Hyla

# Logos and Human Rights

## Student action prods UW apparel to go sweat-free

By **CHRIS MILLER**  
Contributing Writer

*A wake to wake up: an anti-sweatshop student activist in front of the UW president's office March 29, where they staged a mock funeral for a unionized garment factory in the Dominican Republic. Photo by Chris Miller.*



On a cherry-blossom spring day, bagpipes in full mourn, the members of University of Washington Student Labor Action Project (their tagline: "Students and Workers United to SLAP Corporate Greed") held a wake for the recent closure of the BJ&B factory in the Dominican Republic — the only unionized factory in the region.

The event began with an eulogy: "We are gathered here today in mourning for the death of BJ&B, a garment factory... long a symbol within the anti-sweatshop movement, a concrete testament to the power of student and worker solidarity."

Dressed in black, carrying a tombstone, the wake processed through campus and into President Mark Emmert's office on Red Square, where members appealed for the school to stand up for sweatshop-free labor.

"We're fighting for human rights standards. Poverty leads to conflict," said Masha Burina, UW SLAP member. "It's easy to look away."

Rod Palmquist, who delivered the eulogy dressed as a preacher, visited non-union factories in Guatemala last summer and heard testimonials about the working conditions. "You have to fight for a bathroom break. A pregnant female worker was feeling woozy but wasn't allowed to get water or use the bathroom. She fainted, and on the way to the hospital, lost her child."

BJ&B's contracts dwindled after its 2003 unionization: Reebok/Adidas pulled out in 2004, Nike's orders slowed, and the workforce was dropped from 1,600 to around 350 at February's closure.

According to the Workers' Rights Consortium, Nike cited slower production rates, higher cost, and decreasing demand for a particular hat produced by BJ&B as reason for its withdrawal in late February. The situation was not transparent, says the WRC — Nike refused to produce information corroborating its claims.

The WRC analysis links these complaints to the unionization: without forced overtime, production was slowed. The factory owner, South Korea's Yupoong Inc., had incentive to shift contracts to its more profitable Vietnamese and Bangladeshi factories. Universities have a powerful bargaining tool they could use on behalf of workers: the exclusive rights to license a fac-

tory to manufacture their logo-bearing merchandise. Last year, UW sold just under \$4 million worth of apparel.

SLAP is proposing that all UW-licensed garment workers be entitled to a living wage through the Designated Suppliers Program. The DSP represents an attempt to consolidate the influence of the \$4 billion-a-year university apparel market and reward unionized factories with longer-term, stable contracts. This prevents the factory from being subject to the cut-and-run tactics that closed BJ&B. Participating schools, which include Duke and the University of California systems, agree to absorb the cost of paying a living wage, an expected raise in retail prices of 1 to 6 percent, according to SLAP.

The decision to join the DSP rests with the UW Licensing Advisory Committee. Norm Arkans, of the LAC, says the deliberations will take all quarter. "We need to assess what the impact would be on manufacturers and workers, and try to understand why some of our peer universities have decided to go down this path and why others have decided not to."

UW SLAP will be conducting demonstrations throughout the spring to support the DSP proposal. ■

### [Take action]

SLAP's online petition is at <http://students.washington.edu/uwslap/>.

"We are gathered here today in mourning for the death of BJ&B, a garment factory... long a symbol within the anti-sweatshop movement, a concrete testament to the power of student and worker solidarity."

— Eulogy from mock funeral of Dominican Republic garment factory, held at UW

## Short Takes

### The Senate's take

The House giveth. The Senate taketh away. Well, not in all cases, but enough to be noticeable in the proposed state budget that the Senate released last week.

Advocates for the poor say they're glad the Senate budgeted \$13.5 million for children's dental care and \$3.3 million to cover school-lunch co-pays. But, in the areas of low-income housing, health coverage, and college assistance, they say the Senate falls short.

For one thing, the Senate failed to match the governor and House in increasing the state's Housing Trust Fund to \$140 million. Currently at \$100 million, the fund is a primary source of grants to build low-income housing in the state. "The Senate's budget is a huge step backwards," says Ben Gitenstein, executive director of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance.

Enrollment levels for the state's Basic Health Plan are another disappointment. Though health and human services advocates would like to see the health plan's enrollment returned to its 2001 levels, which would mean adding 20,000 slots, the Senate budget adds just 3,000. The Senate also budgeted nothing for Opportunity Grants, a program that provides additional financial aid so low-income students can go to college. The House budgeted \$15 million.

Like the House, the Senate also provided no increase for welfare or General Assistance - Unemployable grants, but did go along with funding a new program that would provide an extra \$100 a month to helping families exiting welfare.

— Cydney Gillis

### 33 million little pieces

It takes money to run the nation's Urban Indian Health Program (UIHP): \$33 million, to be exact. But if President Bush has his way, next year, the UIHP will be running on empty. Literally.

For his Fiscal Year 2008 Budget, Bush has proposed chopping every single dollar of federal funding for the UIHP. His rationale? That the needs of those currently being served by urban Indian health organizations can be addressed, instead, by other community health centers.

But his wish to gut the program — which funds 34 urban health organizations, serving 150,000 Native people annually across the country — is being challenged by Congress. In a March 29 letter, 31 Congressional members — including local reps Jim McDermott and David Reichert, and national luminaries Dennis Kucinich and John Conyers, Jr. — asked that the FY08 dollars for the program be retained, at least at their current level.

In certain respects, Bush's fiduciary shock-and-awe campaign against the UIHP is a repeat performance. The FY07 budget he presented to Congress also included a total fiscal evisceration of the program, based upon the same contention that its services duplicated those already provided by other health centers. Kept alive through a continuing resolution set in motion in October 2006, the program just had its FY07 service budget fully restored on March 22.

Rebecca Corpuz, associate director of the Seattle Indian Health Board, says UIHP is the local organization's primary source of funding. Serving roughly 10,000 urban Natives annually through its medical

and dental programs, she says the local Indian Health Board brings culturally sensitive health care to an ethnic population that faces numerous health issues. Dismantling UIHP, she believes, would devastate the Seattle Indian Health Board and be detrimental to the health of local Natives. "We've been in business since 1970," says Corpuz. "We're pretty much a part of the health care system in Seattle."

— Rosette Royale

### WTO settlement reached

The City of Seattle has agreed to wipe clean the criminal records of the approximately 175 protesters arrested at Westlake Park Dec. 1, 1999, in the course of the WTO anti-globalization protests. Plaintiffs in a class-action suit will divvy up a \$1 million settlement. And the Seattle Police Department will train its officers to guard against future violations of the Fourth Amendment.

City Attorney Tom Carr said in a press statement that he believed a January jury decision finding fault with the city's arrest procedure would have been reversed on appeal; however, he settled at the behest of the city's insurer, which would rather pay up than fund an appellate trial. At the heart of the trial was a debate over whether police had

sufficient reason to arrest each and every one of those assembled at Westlake Park that morning. Since the jury concluded that they did not, and that they were dutifully carrying out a city order, the city was found to have violated the constitutional protection against unlawful search and seizure.

— Adam Hyla

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# A State Law Against Hate

## Maryland considers legislation to quell attacks against homeless

By JEN PEARL  
Street News Service

Maryland is poised to be the first state in the nation to enact hate crime legislation protecting homeless people and their property, pending passage of legislation in the Maryland House of Delegates and signing by Gov. Martin O'Malley.

On March 6, Maryland's senate overwhelmingly passed a bill that expands protected classes of people to include homeless people among groups based on race, color, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and nation of origin.

Sen. Alex Mooney, a Republican, introduced the bill after seeing footage of a homeless person in Florida being beaten by teenagers with baseball bats.

"We did some research and saw that it was a problem in more states," says Mooney legislative aide Michael Hough. "There were even a couple cases in Maryland and Baltimore a few years ago."

Reported incidents of attacks against homeless men and women across the country have reached their highest level in years, according to a recent report by the National Coalition for the Homeless. The report details 142 violent crimes nationwide against homeless individuals in the past year; that is the highest number of incidents since NCH's annual study began in 1999 and represents a 65 percent increase from last year.

"It is NCH's position that many of these acts should be considered hate crimes," says Michael Stoops, the executive director of NCH. "Crimes against homeless people are motivated by the same intolerance as hate crimes against people of a certain religious, racial, or ethnic background."

Recent violence against homeless people in Maryland included three fatal beatings in 2001 of homeless men in Baltimore, according to NCH. A group of teenagers was charged in the string of homicides. In 2002, two Maryland police officers were indicted for beating and unleashing a dog on a homeless man. In 2004, a homeless man was fatally beaten after he made negative comments about another man's girlfriend. In 2006, a police officer in Takoma Park was indicted for assaulting a homeless man detained for questioning.

Adam Schneider with Health Care for the Homeless Inc. in Baltimore says that he knows firsthand that there are many unreported violent attacks on homeless people, many of which could be motivated by hate.

"Life on the streets is inherently violent," Schneider says, "and individuals who live on the streets are particularly vulnerable to attack."

Schneider added that like NCH, Health Care for the Homeless is in favor of this legislation and has been advocating for it.

If the legislation is enacted, those found guilty of a hate crime-based attack on a homeless person, like those convicted of other violent hate crime offenses, would be subject to imprisonment for up to 10 years and/or a fine of up to \$10,000. If a violation results in the death of a victim, the violator is subject to imprisonment for up to 20 years and/or a fine of up to \$20,000.

Other states currently considering similar hate crime bills include Massachusetts, Florida, California, and Nevada, says Michael Stoops.

According to the FBI's most recent report on hate-crime statistics in 2005, law enforcement agencies reported that there were 8,804 victims of hate crimes nationwide that year. An analysis of data for victims of single-bias hate crime incidents showed that 55.7 percent of the victims were targeted because of a bias against a race. The next largest group of those victimized was for a bias against a religious belief, in 16 percent of cases, followed first by a bias against an ethnicity or nation of origin and then by a bias against a sexual orientation. No data are readily available on homeless individuals.

As with all anti-crime law, it is impossible to determine whether hate crime legislation effectively deters attacks, according to Jack Levin, Northeastern University professor and co-author of *Hate Crimes Revisited: America's War on Those Who Are Different* (Westview Press, 2002).

"Hate crime laws send a message," says Levin, "namely, that Americans will not tolerate hate and violence against the vulnerable." ■

"Life on the streets is inherently violent," Schneider says, "and individuals who live on the streets are particularly vulnerable to attack."

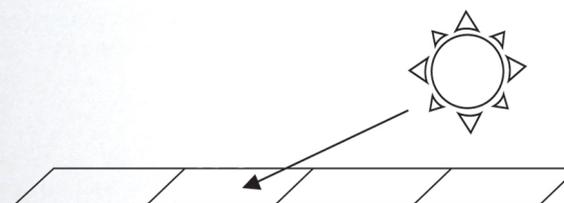
— Adam Schneider,  
Health Care for the Homeless,  
Baltimore

Laura Thompson Osuri contributed to this article. ©Street News Service: www.streetpapers.org.

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### Story Problem 8

Assume sunlight travels to Earth at a rate of 186,000 miles per second and concrete possesses a thermal mass of .15 degrees Fahrenheit per hour (in direct sunlight). If the temperature drops to 27 degrees Fahrenheit, how much perseverance do you need to fend off hypothermia?



SEA helps young adults who survived life on the street and now want to earn a college degree. Once accepted, students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Please visit [seattleeducationaccess.org](http://seattleeducationaccess.org) to support our scholarship program.



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## Go Local

Two decades after he alarmingly forecast *The End of Nature*, Bill McKibben sees hope in environmental activism

By JOE MARTIN  
Contributing Writer

"It's crazy that the average bite of food in this country travels 2,000 miles to reach our lips.

Only in the perverse economics of cheap fossil fuel could we bring a head of lettuce from California to New York so people can eat the same menu all year round, and yet ignore what is going on seasonally around a local community. One result, of course, is that the lettuce doesn't even taste very good."

Published in 1989, Bill McKibben's first book, *The End of Nature*, has proven to be a truly prophetic work. It remains an eloquent argument concerning the dangers of global warming, a concept that is no longer in the realm of hypothesis. Over the years, McKibben has written about the disconcerting ecological and social implications of excessive materialism and technological surfeit. He continues his exploration of these themes in his new book, *Deep Economy: The Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future* (Times Books). Therein McKibben elucidates the wisdom of local economies in which the richness of community can provide a hopeful and countervailing vision to the impersonal and rapacious dimensions of globalism.

Recognizing the need to generate more action around the issue of global warming, McKibben has orchestrated a day of protest — Step It Up 2007 — on Sat., April 14, to urge elected officials to take immediate steps to meet the planetary crisis.

"Rather than bring a million people to Washington, D.C., and burn up even more hydrocarbons in the process," says McKibben, "we want everyone to gather within their locality. It is going to be the biggest day of environmental protest since the first Earth Day in 1970."

McKibben has deep roots in the Northwest. His grandfather was once the mayor of Kirkland. Another interesting item in his personal history is that McKibben once ran a homeless shelter in New York City.

**Real Change:** I consider your contribution to the discussion of technology and society to be in the venerable tradition of Jacques Ellul, Neil Postman, Kirkpatrick Sale, and others who have given us erudite critiques of materialism, of industrial and technological excess.

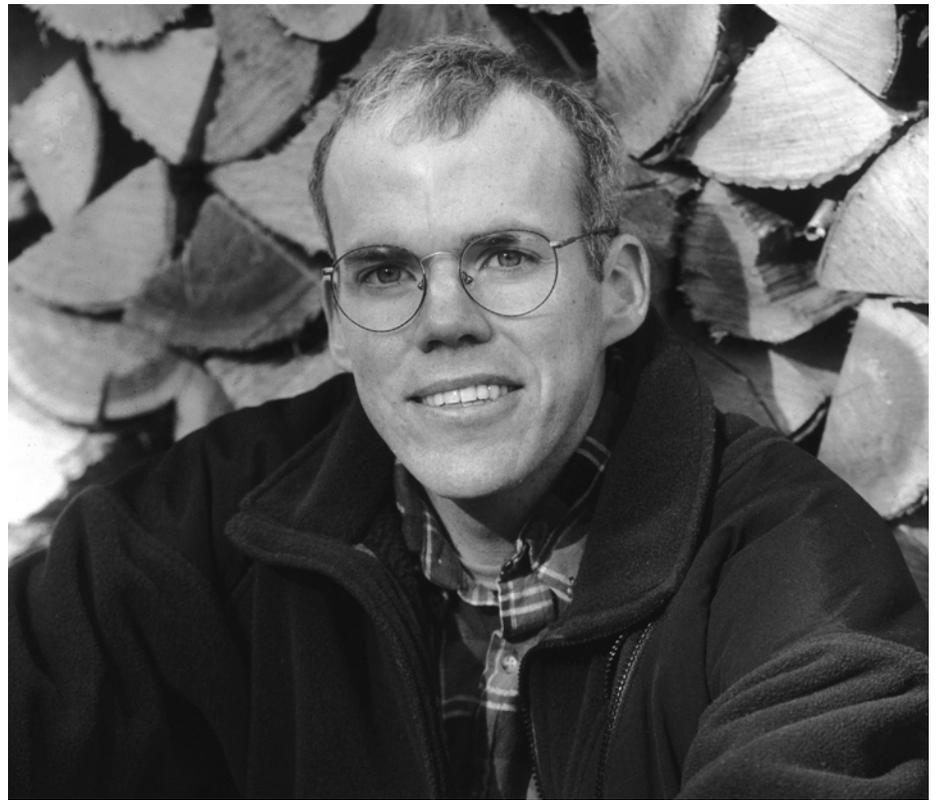
**Bill McKibben:** That's very kind of you. Most of the inspiration of my work stems from my first book, *The End of*

*Nature*. The world we have known was about to undergo a significant change. Global warming demonstrates that human beings have grown to a point where we are able to alter everything around us in dangerous ways. It calls into question everything about our previously held conceptions about how the world's ecology works. At this point I am very interested in the existential questions that are raised. In American culture, this is a question of individualism versus community.

In another of my books, *The Age of Missing Information*, I noted that our TV culture tells us that the individual human being watching the TV is the most important thing on earth. That is an ecologically, psychologically, and socially dangerous message. The point of my new book, *Deep Economy*, is that the system of hyper-individualism underlies our rapid economic growth, and it's no better for us than it is for the planet. It leaves us less happy and less socially connected. This is bad news, but it's also good news. It means that we can maybe break our addictions to materialism. All of my work is a little subversive, to make people wonder if their understanding of the world is as solid as the conventional wisdom would have it.

**RC:** Must we come to a similar sense of understanding required of any addict to drugs or alcohol, that once the pleasure is gone, a plan for recovery is necessary?

**BM:** We don't want to take this analogy too far. We don't want to dishonor people who struggle with horrible physical addictions, but I think it's apropos in another sense. An addict must struggle



to imagine an alternative to the troubled reality to which he or she is accustomed. One's vision closes in, if you're a junkie. Likewise our society's vision is closed in. We can no longer imagine any arrangement that does not involve economic growth. We can't envision how we might exist without having more stuff than we had last year. Growth for the sake of growth has become the measuring post, and what you measure is what you do. It's hard to break out of that. We may not. Many addicts don't break out of addiction. I've known more failures than successes. But some do recover. So one keeps going.

**RC:** Stakes here are high. In Aldous Huxley's fictional *Brave New World*, he writes of how the advocates of simple living were violently eliminated to pave the way for an elaborate technocratic order. What are we up against, and how do we bring about positive change?

**BM:** We will either change, or change will be imposed on us by nature. The physical systems now set in motion are enormous. If we can indeed head them off, the window of opportunity is small. Our habitual patterns of activity are not

After predicting the effects of global warming in *The End of Nature*, author Bill McKibben sees sustainability in community-based efforts in his new book, *Deep Economy*. Photo by Nancie Battaglia.

#### [The Tide is Rising]

Sustainable Ballard offers a vivid look at the impact of rising sea levels on Seattle at Golden Gardens Park, when citizens will stand at the present high-tide line with bamboo poles marking the risen waterline that global warming will produce. Higher Tides at Shilshole takes place at 9:30 a.m. April 14. For more information, see [www.sustainableballard.org](http://www.sustainableballard.org).

More information about local actions and national events can be found at [www.stepitup07.org](http://www.stepitup07.org).

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### Housing for Homeless Adults Available in Seattle Low Income Housing Institute

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- Arion Court Apartments (male and female)
- Broadway House (female only)
- The Glen Hotel (male and female)

LIHI strives to help residents achieve long-term stability and self-sufficiency.



Continued from Page 6

sustainable. I hope that we will change voluntarily. I am encouraged by that prospect. We have organized a global warming protest which we're calling Step It Up 2007. We started the web site in mid-January. We wanted to organize rallies around the country this coming April 14th to demand big changes. We had no money; it was me and six college students. There are now over a thousand rallies planned nationwide! This level of concern wasn't there even a year ago. I'm very hopeful that we will have an entirely peaceful day.

**RC:** Please talk about your new book, *Deep Economy*.

**BM:** We are past the point where small fixes are going to have any impact on our problems. One curious thing about our present economy is that it grows ever larger without doing anything to address the social inequities in our society. In fact it exacerbates social inequities. You would think that it would be impossible, but it seems to be dictated by the internal logic of that economic system, that only a few benefit by the system. The ultimate hope of my current book is that in building localized economies, we might be able to address both social injustice and the environmental peril that we presently face.

I think scale is extraordinarily important. It has gotten out of control. It's been a long time since Congress has seen fit to raise the minimum wage. But many states and cities have passed better minimum wage laws than the federal law. It is not so easy to abstract the poor when they are close by. Marshall McLuhan aside, I don't think that we can have a working community on a global scale. We must build local economies. I don't worry about the ultimate size of what might be viable. Local economies require that people come into more intimate contact with each other.

Local economies also translate into a more sensible pattern of energy use; you use a hell of a lot less energy. It's crazy that the average bite of food in this country travels 2,000 miles to reach our lips. Only in the perverse economics of cheap fossil fuel could we bring a head of lettuce from California to New York so people can eat the same menu all year round, and yet ignore what is going on seasonally around a local community. One result, of course, is that the lettuce doesn't even taste very good.

**RC:** You are a Methodist. What about the spiritual dimension of this question?

**BM:** I've addressed this question more in other books, but to a very large extent our religious communities have also become infected by hyper-individualism. Not long ago, a poll was taken of American Christians, and 75 percent of those interviewed said that the phrase "God helps those who help themselves" is a Biblical phrase. Of course, it's not. It's from Ben Franklin. It's really weird, but it is precisely the opposite of the sentiment in the Bible. Jesus says over and over again: "Love your neighbor as yourself." That's basically the opposite of helping yourself only. And it turns

out Jesus was right. It works out better if we take care of our neighbors. In the end, we are social creatures.

**RC:** Is there thus a practical dimension — whether perceived from a religious or nonreligious point of view — to fostering a sense of community and neighborliness?

**BM:** Absolutely. That's what we are built for. The central teachings of every religious tradition and every wise person who arises in human history remind us of that fact. But we've bought into an economic system in which more is better. Yet we now know that there is no longer a correlation between wealth and happiness. A yearly \$10,000 income in most countries means base sufficiency. However, in most civilized countries around the world, that means you also get health care, education, and retirement benefits. Even in developing societies there is a greater social sense of things.

**RC:** A recent U.N. study assessed the well-being of children, and out of all the countries studied, the U.S. and Great Britain ranked at the bottom.

**BM:** Thank you, Adam Smith.

**RC:** Please comment on the war in Iraq.

**BM:** What a great sadness. There are so many bad reasons for doing what we are doing. Our system of growth is threatened by the potential loss of oil. My state of Vermont has lost more people per capita in Iraq than any other state in the union. It pisses me off every day. The war in Iraq is the logical conclusion of an economic model that considers its success only in terms of growth. How do you ensure growth? You provide cheap energy. The central part of this is the use of fossil fuel. The moment we run out of fossil fuel will be an interesting moment. Or better yet, we decide to no longer use fossil fuel because of its damaging effect on the environment. Global warming is such a huge problem it may force us to rethink this whole situation.

Or maybe we won't deal with it. We will then discover just how deep our addiction is, whether or not we deal with it. There is no question that detox will be painful. If we get through it, the world will be better than the one we inhabit now. But that is not to minimize the challenge and unpleasantness of going through the process of transformation.

**RC:** You have had the pleasant surprise of witnessing an enthusiastic reaction to your rallying call to protest global warming. More people before April 14 will likely hop on board. Can we hope for a kind of Manhattan Project for the development of solar energy?

**BM:** The Manhattan Project is not the best analogy. Maybe an Apollo Project, so all of us can stand on earth. But after 20 years of hitting myself against the wall, it is gratifying to know that now people really are listening. ■

[Rally]

The national call to curb the worst effects of global warming is scheduled for April 14. In Seattle, a march, rally, and informational fair starts at 2 p.m. in Pioneer Square's Occidental Park. See [www.stepitupseattle.org](http://www.stepitupseattle.org) for more info.

## Think of My Love

(for Manny, Phil & Mada)

Think of my love  
as a red glass button  
that hangs on a threadbare dress  
at the back of your closet.

Think of the dress  
as my longing.

Think of my love  
as an old song that plays  
on a Philco radio and floats  
on the humid summer air  
in 1956 in Boston.

Think of the sheets  
that flap on the roof  
as my longing.

Remember me.  
Find me.  
Give me one moment,  
one moment of your love.

—ELIZABETH ROMERO

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# Becoming a Poet, Unapologetically

**The Ode Less Travelled: Unlocking the Poet Within** by Stephen Fry  
Gotham Books, 2006  
Hardcover, 357 pages, \$25

Review by **CARRIE UFFINDELL**  
Powells.com

“I believe poetry is a primal impulse within us all,” Stephen Fry declares in his new book, *The Ode Less Travelled: Unlocking the Poet Within*. Anyone who can speak and read English can write poetry. “Poetry is made of the same stuff you are reading now, the same stuff you use to order pizza over the phone.”

A British novelist, comedian, and actor, Stephen Fry’s work includes *The Hippopotamus* (a wonderfully naughty romp), *The Liar*, and *Making History*, plus well-known film and television roles in *Blackadder*, *Jeeves and Wooster*, *Gosford Park*, and *V for Vendetta*. Most importantly for this review, Fry is also an avid poetry enthusiast, a frequent judge of poetry contests, and an amateur poet himself.

So why do so many of us avoid the study of technique and form in poetry? Perhaps it is because of a traumatic experience in English class, or the belief that poetry is free verse and can

only be written by the experts. Not so, argues Fry. After all, not all painters or musicians are great artists or talents. They are also hobbyists who enjoy these pursuits outside of work, family,

**“I cannot teach you how to be a great poet or even a good one. But I can show you how to have fun with the modes and forms of poetry as they have developed over the years. By the time you have read this book you will be able to write a Petrarchan sonnet, a Sapphic Ode, a ballade, a villanelle, and a Spenserian stanza, among other weird and delightful forms.”**

and friends. They do it for fun, for enjoyment — just like the amateur poet. All they lack are the tools, confidence, and the three Golden Rules: Take your time, don’t be afraid, and always carry a notebook.

“I cannot teach you how to be a great poet or even a good one,” writes Fry. “But I can show you how to have fun with the modes and forms of poetry

as they have developed over the years. By the time you have read this book you will be able to write a Petrarchan sonnet, a Sapphic Ode, a ballade, a villanelle, and a Spenserian stanza, among other weird and delightful forms; you will be confident with metre, rhyme, and much else besides.”

With this promise in mind, Fry escorts the reader through a lively, well-organized, and straightforward course on form, diction, and poetics today. Witty anecdotes and example poems are interjected into each section, which are punctuated by challenging yet enjoyable exercises, many of which Fry completes, as well. This is a funny and inspirational touch for the reader, who will probably start laughing and reciting passages out loud, much to the amused annoyance of unsuspecting onlookers.

*The Ode Less Travelled* is an excellent book for aspiring poets wishing to learn more about the forms and techniques of prosody. ■

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# Richard Gere, '70s Confidence Man

**Hoax**  
Opens Fri., March 6  
in theaters

Review by **LESTER GRAY**  
Arts Editor

The critical element for out-of-the-headlines movies is the real story behind the story: the subterfuge and venality of the epic monster of our times, the corporation, which at some point reveals its congenital ruthlessness. Into this formula, which did so well for *The Insider* and *Quiz Show*, *Hoax* adds a bit of humor and mystery.

It’s 1971, and writer Clifford Irving (Richard Gere), having had his novel rejected at the last moment by publisher McGraw-Hill, grows angry and despondent. In a moment of genius and desperation he decides to write an authorized biography of Howard Hughes, based on a series of private interviews with the reclusive billionaire (a rare designation in those days). The fact that neither he nor any other journalist had seen or talked to Hughes in years works to his advantage. Who is there to contradict his claim? Hughes, once prominent in the public eye, had gone into seclusion, giving rise to various stories concerning the industrialist that defied verification. Irving gambles that Hughes will not emerge from his hiding place to dispute the writer’s claims.

Irving, with the assistance of his wife (Marcia Gay Hardin), on whom he had been cheating, and his trusted friend and researcher Dick Suskind (Alfred Molina) begins to construct a voluminous chronicle, his inventions bridging heretofore unearthed but verifiable information.

The author turned con man could not have been successful without the help of the publisher that has just rejected his novel. For McGraw-Hill, he reserved the first shot to take part in this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Although skeptical, the publisher couldn’t resist the chance of pulling off an incredible coup or risking the shame they would suffer for letting it slip through their hands. In any con, you need the greed of the mark, which in this case was the publisher.

McGraw-Hill’s trust was somewhat justified. They vetted the project as well as they could without talking to the eponymous subject. Those who had been close to Hughes and read the transcript certified that some of the information presented by Irving could only have come straight from the horse’s mouth.

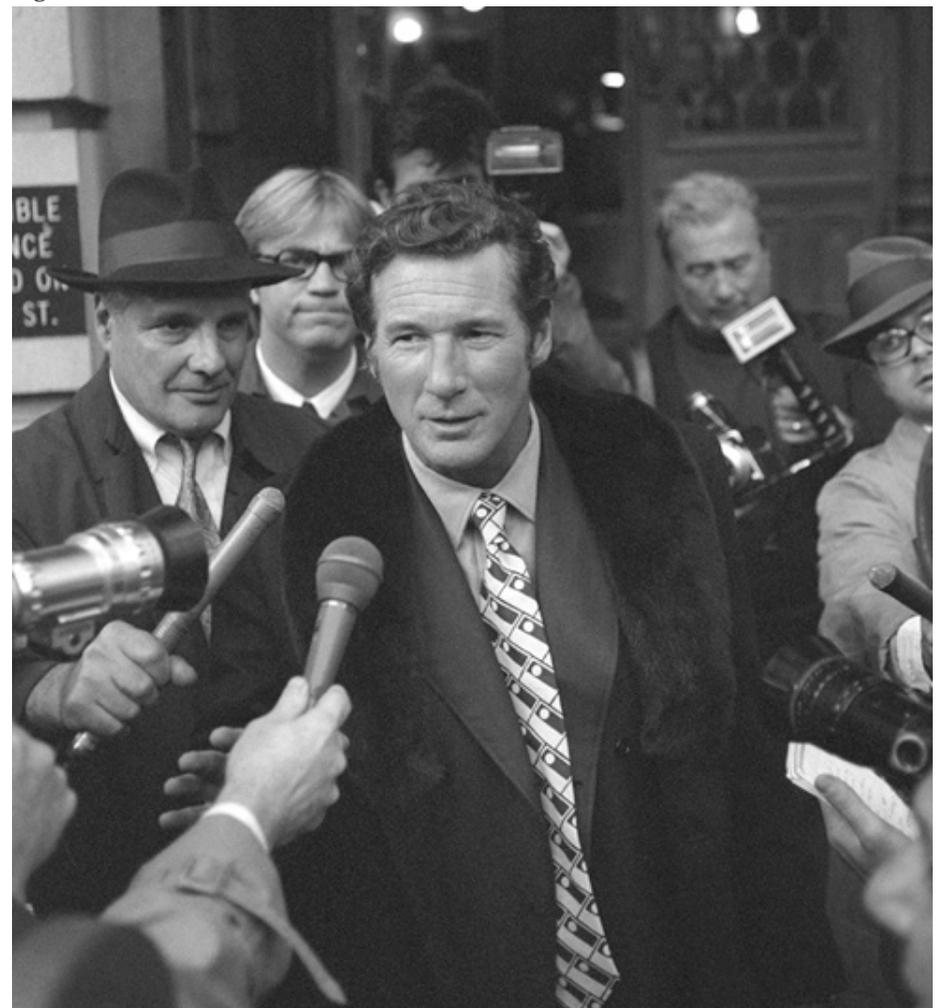
As if this tale weren’t wild enough in itself, screenwriter William Wheeler brings in a bit of extra mischief. Recalling

the political tableau of the times, Wheeler adds plausible twists to the story, contributing suspense and a delicious black humor.

Gere, impeccable as the audacious, unscrupulous conman, remains sympathetic to the end. His depiction of an inventive, indefatigable Irving has you pulling for him even at his most unctuous moments.

And in case you don’t remember how Irving’s work was finally revealed to be a hoax, I won’t spoil it for you. But it’s the stuff out of which durable conspiracy theories and urban legends are born. ■

*Richard Gere in Hoax.*



**Richard Gere, impeccable as the audacious, unscrupulous conman, remains sympathetic to the end.**



Adventures  
in Irony

©Dr. Wes Browning

## Necessity Is the Mother of Camo

When I first heard “it necessarily follows” as a kid, it sounded fishy. It sounds like “it’s necessarily successive.” How can it be cessive and not cessive at the same time?

It turns out the “cede” in “succeed” means “yield,” as in *sub cedere*: “to yield [the card that was] under [the last one].” And the “cede” in “necessary” means “yield,” too, and the “ne” means “not,” so “necessary” is about being unyielding. So the expression looks even more oxymoronic than ever. But it’s not, because the expression is saying that the Fates unyieldingly deal (yield) that next card.

In fact, “it necessarily follows” apparently sums up the Romans’ view of the Fates. The Romans considered Necessity to be the Mother of all the Fates, rather than of Invention, as we do. The Daddy of the Fates skipped.

I’ve been thinking about the Roman Necessity since I attended the unveiling of the new King County logo in the likeness of Martin Luther King Jr., a success in a modern sense of the word. The Necessity in that case is evident in the more than 20 years of political work, involving nudging, dragging, provoking, and the occasional voting here and there, plus the fated presence of the right people on the King County Council, plus the right people to design the new logo, plus the good will of most people involved, and the vanishing will of those not.

But Necessity doesn’t always give you so much warning. Take desegregation, for example.

Mention desegregation to most people born after WWII, and they think of the South. They’d say the first big breakthrough was 1954’s *Brown v. Board of Education*. That decision came about in the same way our new logo did: Folks drove straight at it ’til they got there.

But I grew up in the Army and I have a terrific childhood memory, so I clearly recall that the U.S. military, which is a large national and not at all regional institution, needed desegregation and was already desegregating before the Southern

schools had to. Not being very political when I was a toddler, I don’t recall how the Necessity played out, so I’ve since looked it up.

Here’s how it went down, courtesy of the Truman Presidential Museum and Library and others. In July 1948, Truman issued Executive Order 9981, which called for “equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin.” Three days later Truman clarified the order, saying, yes (to General Omar Bradley, especially), that means desegregate.

Next, the generals dragged their feet. The Secretary of the Army said, the following month, that segregation had to go, but not immediately. Committees were formed to study how segregation could happen before the continents remerged. Later, the Secretary admitted to favoring segregation. By December 1949, there was a new Secretary of the Army, but he was still saying we have to go slow.

Then, in April 1950, the Army ended its 10 percent quota of African-American recruitment. That quota had not been an Affirmative Action quota. It served to maintain African-American troop at a steady level to prevent fluctuations. In a segregated system, fluctuations of the segregated minority could create pesky logistical surpluses and shortfalls.

No one, including Truman, thought that the inefficiencies expected to arise from dropping the quota would have any noticeable immediate impact. In fact, until late June there wasn’t a problem. No chaotic fluctuations of Black troop levels, no logistical nightmares.

Then, before dawn, June 25, 1950, so much hell broke loose over the 38th parallel in Korea that Truman thought WWII was starting. By the end of the next month, the U.S. and South Korean forces were almost driven off the peninsula, and everybody there needed everybody else’s logistical support. By the time the war was a year old, the Army was integrated in Korea and throughout its Asian outposts.

Necessity had arrived in camouflage. ■

Necessity doesn’t  
always give you  
warning. Take  
desegregation,  
for example.



REAL-LIFE  
ANSWERS TO  
YOUR LEGAL  
HASSLES

Answers are intended for general information only and are not intended to take the place of the advice of your own attorney. Ask a Lawyer is in partnership with the Access to Justice Institute at Seattle University and Foster Pepper. Got questions? E-mail [atji@seattleu.edu](mailto:atji@seattleu.edu).

My children live in another state, and that state won’t allow me any visitation rights. What can I do?

According to attorney Gavin Gauckler of Foster Pepper PLLC, in child custody cases, the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration. Trial courts have broad discretion in deciding these cases, but there is a heavy presumption in favor of parental care. Federal law states that a parent who doesn’t have primary custody of a child is entitled to reasonable visitation rights. Therefore, family courts will usually order some form of visitation.

The relocation of the custodial parent, either within the state or to another one, often produces practical difficulties with visitation. Traditionally, courts have put restrictions on parents moving to a different state with a child (especially if the parent was moving to keep the other parent from visiting the child). In many situations, courts have required the moving parent to get the court’s permission prior to an out-of-state relocation. But, because it is increasingly common for parents to live in different states post-divorce, the restrictions have been changing.

Practical problems with custody between parents who live in different states led Congress to enact the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act and the Parental Kidnapping Prevention Act. The UCCJA is effective in every state and preempts state laws

regarding a state court’s authority over matters of child custody for children with parents in different states. Both the PKPA and the UCCJA generally limit jurisdiction over these conflicts to the child’s “home state.” These laws effectively act to prevent matters of child custody from moving from the courts of the child’s “home state” to those of another.

Under the UCCJA, a child’s “home state” is the state in which the child has resided for the preceding six months. The law establishes that the court in the child’s new state of residence must be in contact with the court in the child’s former state of residence, where the original custodial decisions regarding the child were made. Therefore, if a parent has secured or obtained visitation rights in the original state, he or she will have the same visitation rights in another state.

If your children have relocated to another state with their custodial parent but lived in Washington when the custody determination was made, your original visitation rights should still be in effect in their new state of residence. You will want to file a copy of the Washington court’s original custody determination with the court in the state in which your children live now. Once that court is made aware of your existing visitation rights, the state is required to enforce that order. Likewise, if the custody determination was made in another state and the children now live in Washington, file a copy of the custody determination in a Washington court, so that your visitation rights can be enforced here. ■



Thurs., March 15, 8:03 a.m., 22nd Ave. E., Abandoned Building.

An officer working uniformed patrol was dispatched to a report of activity at an abandoned house on 22nd Ave E. The report referenced several people sitting on the back porch, possibly smoking narcotics. Upon arrival the officer noticed two suspects, a transient Black male aged 44 and a transient white female aged 37, exiting the property by moving aside the temporary fencing. He contacted both parties and detained them until other units arrived. When the other units showed up, the officer inspected the property that the suspects had just exited. He found the house abandoned with all the windows boarded up and several “No Trespassing” signs posted on the side of the building. He informed the suspects that they were under arrest for criminal trespass — they were subsequently booked into King County Jail.

Thurs., March 15, 11:26 a.m., Dearborn St. and Rainier Ave.

The complainant, a driver for Goodwill, saw the suspects, two transient white males aged 53 and 36, walking by the metal recycling plant on Rainier Ave. south of Dearborn. They were hauling a large quantity of commercial grade copper wire in a “Goodwill” cart. The complainant believed the wire to be new, and probably stolen, so he called 911 as he was driving by. When officers arrived at the scene, they found the suspects were attempting to sell approximately 100 pounds of copper wire for \$150. The first suspect stated that a friend in the electrical trade had given him the wire to sell. The second suspect said he was just friends with the first suspect and was only helping him to sell the wire — he wasn’t sure where it had come from. Due to the high volume of copper wire theft in the area, the officer contacted a detective, who responded to the scene and interviewed both suspects independently. After obtaining additional information, it was decided the detective would seize the copper wire until the first suspect’s story could be verified.

Mon., March 19, 5 p.m., Pine St.

A transient white male was found sleeping on the ground under a “No Trespassing” sign in the 1200 block of Pine St. He was contacted by an officer, and gave a name and date of birth. The officer was unable to locate a person using that information, and the suspect gave another name. A data check on that information brought up numerous aliases, and also a description that appeared to match the suspect. Several warrants were also found. Due to the confusion and inconsistencies in the suspect’s identity he was booked as a John Doe. His identity, was subsequently verified, as was an outstanding warrant. Suspect was booked into King County Jail.

Compiled from incident reports of the Seattle Police Department by Emma Quinn. Got your own experience to relate? Call us at (206)441-3247 ext. 207 and we’ll get the scoop.

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# Letters

[editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org)

## Down in the Delta

Dear *Real Change*,

I am a former Seattleite, now living and teaching high school in the rural Mississippi Delta, and was particularly drawn to Laura Peach's "Be All that You Can Be" article in the March 14-20 *Real Change*. Growing up in northside Seattle Public Schools, I have strong memories of rarely seeing a military presence at my schools but an overwhelming presence at central and southside schools. This disparity always made me uncomfortable, and the unfairness in many ways fueled my passion for entering public education in hopes to fix some of the broken policies and underfunded programs.

However, nothing compares to what I see now at my rural, isolated, and poor high school, 99 percent of the student body being minority. JROTC is a strong organization that flourishes at my school. Students, many of which have never seen the Mississippi River — a 30-minute drive from our town — are drawn to the military and its promises of paying higher education and helping students "see the world." The question that Ms. Ragland posed at the end of the article is what I wish to speak to: "Why not push for kids to go to AmeriCorps or the Peace Corps instead of the military?" And, unbeknownst to many, this is exactly what the U.S. Public Service Academy organization is trying to do.

The U.S. Public Service Academy will be America's first national civilian university that will be modeled on the military service academies by providing rigorous undergraduate education and helping to develop passionate and patriotic leaders who want to serve their country. The difference is that

upon graduating, these students will enter the civilian service sector of our economy — by working as teachers, police officers, emergency responders, and other critical public service jobs at the local, state, and nation levels — in order to really address critical needs in our society. The goal of the USPSA is that these graduates will be on the fast track to leadership, propelling them into a lifetime of public service, arguably jobs that are much more beneficial to the betterment and advancement of our society than military jobs.

On March 22nd, Senators Hillary Clinton and Arlen Specter, and Representatives Jim Moran and Christopher Shays joined dozens of USPSA supporters to announce the introduction of the U.S. Public Service Academy Act to Congress. Both Senators called for immediate action on this legislation and the next step will be hearings to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs in the Senate and to the Committee on Education and Labor in the House.

However, there is still a lot that we as citizens can do to convince the Congress to support this Act and get this academy built! Please visit the website ([www.uspublicserviceacademy.org](http://www.uspublicserviceacademy.org)) and find a way to help, whether it's by just signing the petition and writing our representatives or making presentations about the academy in the Greater Seattle community.

I pride myself on being a North-westerner by heart, because never have I lived in a place where grassroots movements to better our society have flourished like they do in Seattle. That is why I know that the Northwest will help the U.S. Public Service Academy give students an opportunity to become patriotic leaders of our country who will address critical needs in American society... instead of rely on their bodies to fight unnecessary wars overseas.

**Alexandra Wakeman**  
Indianola, Mississippi

*Real Change* welcomes letters to the editor of up to 250 words in length. Please include name, address, phone number, and email for author verification. Letters should be addressed to Editor at *Real Change*, 2129 2nd Ave., Seattle, WA, 98121, or emailed to [editor@realchangenews.org](mailto:editor@realchangenews.org).

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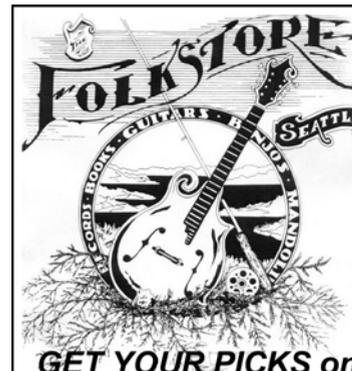
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**Community Brainstorming Session** for Design of "Homeless Place of Remembrance." Tues., March 27, 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m., 1911 First Ave. (between Stewart and Virginia). For info, call (206) 956-0334.

*Real Change* classifieds are a way to reach 30,000 loyal readers. Call 441-3247, or email [classified@realchangenews.org](mailto:classified@realchangenews.org).

# Calendar

## This Week's Top Ten

### Friday 4/6

Is it a war for oil, or a war to inflate oil prices? This and other questions will be pondered at a screening of Ronan Doyle's latest film, *Oil, Smoke, And Mirrors*. Come for the free film, stay for the discussion afterwards. Presented by Meaningful Movies and Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice. 7 p.m., Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., Wallingford.

### Saturday 4/7

*The Rough Guide to Shopping with a Conscience* is rock critic Richie Unterberger's foray into pocket reference guides, and it provides conscientious consumers with an opportunity to examine how and where their money and time are best spent. Unterberger points out good/bad boycotts, how to limit your climate change footprint when traveling, and what to keep an eye out for when buying groceries at PCC. 2 p.m., Elliott Bay Book Store, 101 S. Main St.

Learn how to teach about war with an emphasis on peaceful alternatives, using classroom tools and art supplies, film, and poetry. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., Richard Hugo House, 1634 11th Ave. Info: (206) 632-7587.

### Tuesday 4/10

The success of Cuba's 1959 revolution echoes to this day — the small Caribbean island is one of the last holdouts of Communism in the entire world. *Our History Is Still Being Written* is a new book, in the words of three decorated Cuban generals all of Chinese descent. A panel discussion with Martín Koppel, who interviewed the generals for the book, will look at the involvement of Chinese in Cuba's struggles, as well as the way post-revolutionary Cuba addressed racial tensions. 6:30 p.m., Room 205, Smith Hall, UW.

Charles Simic sprouted from violence at his onset, born in Yugoslavia in 1948, growing up in war-torn Belgrade until 1953 when he escaped to the United States, where he's lived ever since. Now recognized as a poet of record in this country and others, Simic beat overwhelming odds to get to this point. 7:30 p.m., Intiman Theatre, 201 Mercer St. Tickets: (206)269-1900.

### Wednesday 4/11

How can we ensure disasters on the scale of Hurricane Katrina never hap-

pen again? Some might point fingers at the U.S. government, but there are other preventions, such as improved forecasting and resource management that can be of use. Dr. Edward Seidel of Louisiana State University will discuss what we learned after Katrina. 5:30 p.m., UW2 Lecture Hall, UW Bothell Campus, 18115 Campus Way NE.

### Thursday 4/12

Former presidential candidate, New Jersey Senator, and NBA superstar Bill Bradley explains why the Republicans rule the political court while the Democrats double dribble, and how Democrats can fix that. 7:30 p.m., Town Hall, 1119 8th Ave.

You know HBO as the company responsible for some of the most intelligent television in recent years, shows like *Rome*, *Deadwood*, and *Big Love*. Last year they brought out the big guns for a special on climate

change, called *Too Hot Not to Handle*. It promises an incendiary guide to the effects of global warming on the United States, presented as "high-octane propaganda" to fuel the masses into taking action. 7 p.m., NW Environmental Education Council, 650 S. Orcas St. Suite 220.

### Saturday 4/14

A local chapter of Step It Up 2007, an environmental activist organization, will be holding an event for National Day of Climate Action, painting a giant blue line on the Seattle waterfront to show how far the water level could rise in a climate change scenario. To participate, send an email to [pbirkeland@StepItUpSeattle.org](mailto:pbirkeland@StepItUpSeattle.org) by 4/12.

Calendar compiled by Paul Rice. Have a suggestion for an event? Email it to [calendar@realchangenews.org](mailto:calendar@realchangenews.org).

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## Director's Corner



Lately, I've been more impressed than usual by how confused we are. It's like we're a nation of the sleepwalking logic-challenged. Cause, effect; symptom, disease: we don't seem to be able to tell the difference anymore.

But it's hard to see clearly when you're standing in a shit storm. The list is overwhelming. Poor people are getting poorer and everybody is working harder for less. Black people are getting jailed. Corporations run the world. Democracy is on the ropes. The rich are winning. The planet is in peril. The war is a meat grinder. No one can find the off switch. And so forth.

No wonder people just want to watch TV and shop. Who wants to look at that?

One good strategy for getting through a very dark night is to find a few fixed points of light and set your attention there. Increase the power of organized labor and organize the unorganized. Seek fairness in how the costs of necessary services are shared and how much profit can be made at the expense of others. Defend the environment from corporate rape. Build democratic institutions. Make access to resources like education and health care more widespread.

As the 2008 Presidential elections starts to heat up, I am again struck by how little is being said. The elephant in the room is class. *Qui bono* — who benefits? It's the one question no one's allowed to ask.



## First things First

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### Strengthen Mental Healthcare Coverage

**Issue:** The General Assistance—Unemployable (GA-U) program is meant to provide temporary aid while people recover from a short-term disability or illness. This assistance is critical, but not fully adequate in addressing the needs of the people who receive it. The Legislature is in the process of negotiating a 2007-09 budget right now, and the GA-U program is one of the important issues being discussed.

**Background:** For people working hard just to make ends meet, a serious illness or a temporary disability is more than just a health concern — it can lead to job loss and homelessness. Short-term relief is sometimes all that is needed to fend off the crisis and help someone get back on their feet.

Washington State has a program that's meant to provide that short-term relief. The General Assistance—Unemployable program offers financial support for people who are suffering a short-term disability and are unable to work. Many GA-U recipients are low-income or homeless individuals who are temporarily incapacitated; often they live in transitional housing, and GA-U allows them to pay the sliding scale rent required to stay off the streets.

In addition to a cash grant of \$339 per month, people receiving GA-U are provided health care benefits. But while nearly half of the individuals who receive GA-U have mental health care needs, mental health is not covered beyond prescription management. Primary care physicians are not equipped to address the full range of problems confronting clients with mental health care needs, which affect every aspect of a person's life. Addressing the mental health needs of GA-U clients would improve their overall health and decrease costs to the state.

The Washington House of Representatives released a budget that includes \$3.4 million for a pilot program in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties adding mental health care to the GA-U program. But neither the Senate budget, which came out last week, nor the Governor's version of the budget includes that funding. We have to ensure that this urgently needed addition makes it through the negotiations in the coming weeks and is included in the final budget.

The General Assistance—Unemployable program is meant to be a temporary solution to a temporary problem in someone's life. But as long as the solution is inadequate, the problem won't be going anywhere.

**Action:** Contact your state legislators this week and ask them to include the \$3.4 million designated for mental health care in the final budget. Call the legislative hotline at 1(800)562-6000 or take action online at [www.socialjusticenow.org](http://www.socialjusticenow.org).

**QWEST, Continued from Page 1**

"You have to keep an eye on what you're doing, on everything going on around you," he says. "None of the people I was working with was hip to that."

Shellman and fellow union member Al Crawshaw both say they worked four hours without the 10-minute break required by law, and both describe having to show up early and stay 20 to 30 minutes after their shift to sign out.

ERM paid the wage they would normally get on a union call, \$21.63. But at non-stadium jobs, Crawshaw points out, ERM pays about \$9.50 an hour and tacks on fees and charges that don't go to the employees. "They're a temp agency," he says.

For someone just out of high school, it's exciting to get a T-shirt and get paid to watch a concert, but "none of these guys are really thinking of it as a career," Shellman says. "For those of us who do it for a living, it's a skilled trade, a profession."

That's an idea ERM President John Morrison scoffs at.

"A career where you work part-time is not really a definition of a ca-

reer to me," he says. "Stagehands are paid hourly, and there's no guarantee of work."

Morrison, who is currently fighting the state Department of Labor & Industries over \$140,000 that L&I says the company owes it for 2002, acknowledges that ERM doesn't pay workers for filling out forms before or after a shift. But waiting to sign out at the end of a shift, he says, "takes five or 10 minutes. A half hour? No."

The company hasn't set up a benefits package because, to qualify, "you have to work 1,000 hours a year," he says. "None of our people would qualify. Very few ever qualify, even at the union."

That may be true, but Shellman says that's not the point. "Public facilities," he says, "shouldn't be involved with employers who treat their employees poorly." ■

**[Events]**

In addition to the April 27 information picket at WaMu Theater, Local 15 of IATSE plans a larger action at a Qwest Field concert with Kenny Chesney on July 7.

**COPS, Continued from Page 1**

Although it may seem to be a gesture of solidarity with the union, City Councilmember Jean Gooden says it's not about the negotiations.

"[Security officers] do play a critical role supporting the industry's economy," Gooden says. "We want people to be aware of them."

"I'm sure the timing of [the proclamation] doesn't hurt," she adds. But she insists that the proclamation wasn't carte blanche for the union from the Council. "We haven't seen any specifics on benefits or compensation.... I hope [the officers] can negotiate well with their employers."

Another group that supported the Appreciation Day was the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA), a business association that counts most major building owners in the city, as well as security companies, as members. But BOMA hesitated when it came to endorsing the union.

"I wouldn't say BOMA supports the unionization of security guards,

but we don't oppose it," says Rod Kauffman, president of BOMA. "We have encouraged [security companies] to dialogue with the union, and we've had a friendly cooperative business relationship with Local 6."

Kauffman says they've been happy to at least cooperate with the union, because they received assurances that there would be no strikes.

For their part, Local 6 is excited to head to the table, and security officers like Miles and Schroeder are itching for the chance to prove they're worth more than the stereotype. "As security officers, we're doing our best in order to do our job, and we're looking for the companies to recognize that and show us the respect that we deserve," says Miles. ■



STAGEHAND UNION MEMBER AL CRAWSHAW SAYS HE WAS NOT GIVEN ROUTINE BREAKS WHILE WORKING AS A NON-UNION STAGEHAND AT QWEST FIELD. STADIUM OPERATORS FIRST & GOAL HAD AN AGREEMENT CALLING FOR UNION LABOR FOR CONCERT SETUP. PHOTO BY KEN DEAN.

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